Meigs County Telegraph

$2 per annum. A WEEKLY JOURNAL---DEVOTED TO POLITICS, LITERATURE, AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE, AND NEWS. $1.50 in advance.

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Poetry.

RETROSPECTION.

BY TOM MOORE.

When I remember all
The friends so linked together,
I've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather,

I feel like one who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled, whose garland's dead,
And all but he departed!

Thus in the stilly night,
Ere slumbers chain has bound me,
Sad memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

A COUNTRY HOME.

Oh! give me a home in the country wide,
And a seat by the farmer's wood fireside,
Where the fire burns bright,
On a frosty night.
When the jest and the song and the laugh are free,
Oh! the farmer's home is the home for me.

Oh! give me a home in the country wide,
When the earth comes out as a blushing bride,
With her buds and flowers,
In the bright spring hours,
Her bridal song ringing from fresh-leaved trees
And melody floats on the perfumed breeze.

In summer, a seat in a shady nook,
And close by the side of a purling brook,
Where the violet grows,
Or the pale swamp rose
Fainting and sick 'neath the sun's scorching beam,
Dips her fair petals, in the coling stream.

Oh! give me a home in the country wide,
In the golden days of a farmer's pride,
When his barns are filled,
From the fields he's tilled,
And he feels that his yearly task is done,
Smiling at winter, he beckons him on.

Miscellany.

THE NEW SOUL OF JOHN MARKHAM.

Fifteen years had rolled away since I stood in the market place of the city of Hartford. I left it when the turf was green, and the thrushes were making music on the elms; the turf was green, and the birds were singing then. I saw a staid man in black go by, gravely smiling to the children and I knew he was the settled clergyman, but not the one I left there. There were countrymen standing by their carts in the market; women chaffering with penny-worth purchasers in the stalls; carriages driving into the street filled with ladies on an airing from the watering places near by; old men and young men, women and girls—the manner of life was even as when I left it, the forms, the faces of that once familiar life were forever gone.

Oh! fifteen years make great differences in a returning man. Wherever he may have passed them—in a home as cheerful as the one abandoned, amidst the caresses of the beloved, surrounded by pleasant prospects, fondled by prosperity—it he will go back to the old place, let him remember that a chilly pain in the heart awaits him there, when he shall see trees and houses, and the very street stones stay, but the living pass away and are forgotten.

But when a man has spent his absence as I have mine—for I had not been on the Continent, listening now to Rose Cherie, now to Thalberg, now to the cathedral cadences of Volimo; where the floods break from his resounding lips under the ever blue arch of a resounding sky. I had not been wafted to the upper cataracts, bathed in the nepenthe of that air which lulled the old world Memphis gallants—which lulls the Howadji now; I had not been living with friends who, shoulder to shoulder, worked with me hopefully in the daytime, or welcomed me at night to a glowing hearth in a room where my children sat upon my knee, where the rosy fire-light danced with the shadows on the wall, where a women beloved hushed down the business echoes of my heart with a rich, old ballad in a soft young voice.

I do not often call up these fifteen years, for they are melancholy, maddening ghosts. But when I do, the music with which they stalk into my thoughts is such as this, a monotonous sound of hammers—clink, clink, clink—always in the same measure, and broken only by the fall of stone fragments! a heavy clank of iron doors mercilessly shut in reverberating corridors, with nothing but my own impulse coming afterward; for I spent *my* fifteen years in prison!

Do you ask how I came there? The story is not a long one. I was a junior partner in the banking house of my elder brother near Hartford. One evening about nine o'clock, as I was leaving the steps of my lodging, a heavy hand fell upon my shoulder, and I turned to see a Sheriff's officer, with his assistant, standing closely by me. On the opposite side of the street the lights shown merily from the window of the woman I loved. I was on my way to answer my invitation, and I felt, as every true man feels on such an errand, gentle towards all humanity. So I did not roughly push aside the interloper's hand, as ordinarily I would have done, but quietly moved out from under it, and said, "My man, there is some mistake here.—You have taken the wrong person."

Any one who knows what it is to loose so completely, in a fearful dream, the self-possession on which he would steady himself, that he can no longer say, "'Tis only a dream," but begins to *know* that it is actual, will realize how the awful truth broke on me in an instant as the officer answered:—

"That won't do! you are John Markham of Hartford. In the name of the Commonwealth I arrest you for forgery."

Just then on the opposite side of the street, the curtain went down at the lighted window, and knowing in my soul that it dropped forever between me and the one being who in her hands held all things for which I lived, I felt a quick, cold shudder of agony run through me, and my knees smote together like a coward's. I said no more but went with my captor.

The first night in jail! Ah, that was terrible! The clammy echoing stones of the floor over which I paced in the darkness did not hurt me in their hardness.—The foul, coarse pallet on which at intervals I threw myself in my bewildered weariness, did not chafe me by its coffin narrowness. I was beyond hurt from such things; for in the five minutes between my lodging and my cell I had become aware that I was brought to a position whose sublime awfulness could not be equalled by anything else on earth.—Quicker by far than I can write, yet in this channel, had my thoughts run.

My brother, three days ago, gave me in private, a heavy draft to be collected at another banking house, drawn in his favor by one of his correspondents and indorsed by another. I remember that he looked restless when he gave it to me; that he hurried from the room immediately afterward. I presented the draft; I received the money; the books which I kept bear no account of it. He forged the paper. I am the suspected one. I have no means of proving my innocence, unless, perhaps, by proving his guilt. That, most like, is impossible. At any rate, what a terrible step for a man to take against his dead mother's only other child! And he has a lovely wife whom it would slay. Yet I myself have—O God! shut out her image from me! I must not see it, I shall go mad!

In this groove my thoughts rolled back and forward through the night. Facing this alternative I stood till the day of trial, just one month. My brother came often to see me; he lavished tears and embraces upon me; he retained for me the best counsel—yet he always seemed like one in a delirium of a fever, and ever just as the turnkey swung back the heavy door to let him out, he would stop for a moment, trembling, and with his lips half-opened, as if about to say something more to me—then, without meeting my eye he would rush from the cell. Suffering as I was, suffering still more, as I was about to do, from the consequence of his sin—I could pity him deeply. I could forbear with the cowardness which he could not confess, for I knew how priceless liberty must be to a man, who, losing it, leaves his other soul in that most heart-broken of all widowhood—the widowhood of a convict's wife. She whom I loved visited me many times, always bringing me sweet messages in her presence from the birds and the flowers and the free sky outside—always talking in a voice intensely sustained into cheerfulness, of my acquittal; and restoration to our old hopes. I told her I was innocent, and she believed me. I could not tell her who was guilty.

My trial came on. I need not pain myself with a long recital of the thronged court, the weary questionings and cross questionings, the audible silence of the crowd when the pleas were made, the moment whose shadow fell upon me, when the foreman solemnly said "guilty"—that other moment when I was condemned to the awful alienage of prison for the fifteen years to come.

Then I parted from home and friends. My brother did not bid me good-bye; he lay sick of a raging fever, on whose chances hung life. But she, the holy, the heoric—who had borne all things came to see me go. She clasped my manacled hands in her own; she pressed one long, last kiss upon the convict's lips, and she said, with a solemn cheerfulness, "I will wait for you!" Then, with a superstition which, frivolous though it seem, still crept into the awfulness of that hour, I stopped my watch, and vowed inwardly that its hands should never more move till we met again.

After that, the gates of my prison opened to let in but one message from the life outside. The chaplain brought me a lock of well-known soft brown hair, and told me with a tear in his eye, that an old man had given it to him for me, saying, "My daughter is with God. She died whispering that she would wait for John Markman."

I endured the knowledge of her death with a benumbed patience, uncomplainingly; rarely weeping a single drop. I went through the unvarying round of day labor in the prison yard with a steady, mechanical industry which surprised my taskmaster, for, heretofore, I had been taunted as "the weak gentleman," "white fingers," and whatever other epithet or insult the hardened bullies of discipline are accustomed, at discretion and without fear of chastisement, to confer upon those who are placed in their grasp. At evening I held up the tress into the faint twilight which just fluttered through the grates, and, kissing it, seemed to see her by me—for I could never think of her as dead. That realization was kindly spared me by the fact that no new void can be felt, no new unnaturalness, in the eternal void and unnaturalness of a prison.

But one night coming from work I found the tress gone. Asking the turnkey for it, I was told "Prisoners are allowed no useless articles." From that moment I knew she whom I loved was dead. Like a wild flood the agony of the knowledge rushed upon me. With it came the memory of my burning wrongs—the scorn of man spent upon my innocent head—the perfidy of my only brother—the irredeemable helplessness of all things. And I shut myself up in silent, sullen madness. A most dangerous madness it was. From the time I lost the tresses five years were to elapse before I went out; and if, in that time, a revolt had sprung up in my prison, I had died fighting in its front, for I was ripe for any crime. As it was, I only bode my time. Once out, I would wreak condign vengeance on society—on law—on my brother.

The five years passed—five years of dust and clinking in the yard—of darkness, muttering, low, smothering, heart-burning in the cell. At last, one morning, the warden threw open my door, and I passed out with a slow lock-step which I had been practising nearly a quarter of a life-time. I was going to chapel with the rest—to hear of the Prodigal Son and Magdalen—they, the guilty, but welcomed—I, the innocent, yet the thrust out. But the officer stepped me with these three words, "You are free!"

I did not cheer, nor ring the man's hand, nor even smile. One grows used to forget these ways of the world after fifteen years in prison.

But the revenge which, little by little, had stretched its fibrous roots through the soil of my heart, till every drop of life-juice went to nourish the plant, now began to put forth its blossoms, and I felt them bud into an ecstatic poisonous fragrance. My sweet, and long-hoped-for hour had come. In a few moments more the despised convict should burst open his motley chrysalis, and be rushing, like a winged Nemesis, to settle accounts with a world which had the start of him by fifteen years.

I went to the prison wardrobe and got back that dress which, in the days long gone, I had put off with the rest of my humanity. They were clean, fastidiously gentleman-like as when I had left them. I seemed for a moment, at their sight, to be waking from the terrible eternity of a bad dream—to be finding them folded by my bedside, where they had only lain since the last night.

I had come in with the majesty of the law—a guard on either side. I went out alone—no danger was apprehended of my escaping from the other prison, the world. Leaving those high gray walls behind, I struck into the road for Hartford. Had I come out five years before, I might have been expressly softened by the long, unwonted music of the birds, that, from trees and orchard walls, made the air full of their joy. Now I had lived past the time when such things could touch me, and walked still in the lock-step, looking neither about nor forward, but ever moodily on the ground. And thus, late in the afternoon, I came whither the commencement of my recital finds me, and stood in the market-place of the town which I had seen fade out behind me as I went away in scorn.

No wonder that by all the passers I was stared at as an oddity—something to be suspected and shrunk from, for my grizzled hair was of the prison cut, my clothes had gone out of fashion when the fathers in the streets were children, and not by fear, but long use, I looked no man in the face. And here and there, in knots, the people whispered about me, sometimes with evident carelessness as to how loud. But I only nursed a deeper and more quiet wrath.

There came along that way a throng of children just from school. Stepping up to one of them, I asked, "Does George Markham still live in this place?" The little girl turned up a sunny spring morning face, and answered, "I am his daughter, sir; do you wish to see him?"

A hellish thought suggested itself to me. I said, "Yes, you may show me the way to his house." I knew we should take a cross-path over the fields and pass a long reach of lonely woods. In the most solitary part of that I might wreak upon the guilty head of George Markham the most terrible vengeance which could wipe out his most bitter wrong to me. I would kill his child and bring her home to him, confessing that I did it, and glorifying in the end of that horrid game of quoins on whose first throw he had staked my heaven and lost it.

The little maiden took my hand confidingly. That might unnerve me; so I loosed it, and I told her to go before while I followed. She tossed back her curls and went bounding ahead at a rate my strides were hardly equal to. Still I kept my eye upon her. After a while we came to a low brook-course between two hills, over the foremost one of which I could just see the chimney of my brother's house. I looked about me—no one was in sight—rescue was impossible. The devil whispered, "Now!" Then I called to her to stop, saying I must look for something I had dropped. She obeyed and stood, amusing herself with making wreaths of the violets that grew by the water-course, while I stopped to find a heavy stone which might do my bidding of vengeance surely and silently. All around me in the bed of the brook were nothing but pebbles. I walked a few steps further down in my quest. The little girl must have thought me leaving her, for, all at once, I heard her call gently, "I am waiting for you!"

Gracious God! Who spoke? Do the loved that are forever lost cry to us out of Paradise? "I am waiting for you!" floated down through the prison bars from her whom the Father had just numbered with the saints!

I stood up and wandered back, more dreaming than awake, to the spot where George Markham's daughter still staid, plaiting violets. She turned to me with a smile, and said, "I did not mean to hurry you, sir, but my father is very unwell, and I ought to be at home. Will you please to tell me how late it is?"

For the first time after those fifteen prison years in which knowing toil and darkness only, I had asked no other measurement of time, I mechanically put my hand to my breast and drew out my restored watch. Was I sane? The second hand, stopped at the last kiss of agony given me by my beloved, whether by miracle or the agitation of my grasp I knew not, moved on. Like a lightning flash rushed on me the memory of my vow, "Till we meet this watch shall never count time again."

Yes we had met—met in that voice of quiet waiting—met in this wonderous omen of the watch—met when I knew not—when she was seen by none but God and her sister angels. And the wrathful embers went out in the breast of John Markham, and, viewlessly hovering over him, the long-cherished dead smiled blissfully as she saw in that moment there had entered into him a new soul.

I clasped the little one in my arms. I told her that her father was my only brother, and then waited humbly to see her recoil from the loathsome convict—But with child-like joy she hugged me closer around the neck, and cried, "Oh, I am so glad! I am so glad! Poor papa has been talking about you these four days, and saying, 'But, oh, he must not die!—I cannot die till John comes home!'"

With a reverend step, and bowing low, I came into the room of my dying brother. His pale face flushed and paled again as he saw me; and then, hiding it in the pillow, he cried, "Look not on me! God is wreaking his wrath on the devil who wasted your life!"

"Not so, my brother," I answered solemnly. "I, from my soul forgive you.—How much more shall He who pitieth his children? For me, He hath this day wiped out the past like a tablet, and looking up to him as both of us condemned in His sight, let us join hearts, making no difference, my brother."

I held him on my breast through the waxing and the waning of this strange night—my first night of liberty—my first night with the new soul. And he sorrowed with the sorrowing that needeth no repentance. With a kiss that brought back the days of our childhood, at dawn his spirit departed from me. Then, beside the little girl who had fallen asleep from weariness, I laid him who slept the calmer sleep—the sleep of calmness and peace.—The day came for the reading of the will. Relatives, friends, neighbors, were all collected in the parlor where my dead brother used to sit, pining remorsefully through the long evenings, with his motherless child. Yet they all sat apart from the returned convict, looking at me with an evil eye. But I bore it meekly, with little Rose in her morning dress, nestled against my breast, as if I were the last thing she had on earth to cling to.

The lawyer opened the will and began: "In the name of God, Amen. I, George Markham, banker, of Hartford, being of feeble body, but of sound and disposing mind and memory, do hereby constitute my last will and testament:

"I bequeath my soul to the infinite mercy of God, if it be possible. I bequeath my name to the oblivion of all true men who shall know the truth. That I bequeath to my brother, John Markham, not of bounty, but of immeasurable indebtedness, in my confession that I alone, and unaided, am the author of that damnable sin which brought the shadow of a prison, the loss of all things on his innocent head. And, finally, I give and bequeath to John Markham all my estate, both real and personal, to have and to hold to him, his heirs and assigns forever, confident that he will so have mercy on my guilt as to be in all things a father to my child."

Then, like the friends of Job, my acquaintances came back to me, beholding how I was prospered. Again I stood an upright man in the face of earth as well as heaven, and none uttered an ill whisper of me.

Now I live alone with Rose, who had filled the place of the daughter I might have had but for the fifteen years. She is my child, my companion, my comforter, my pupil. And never on earth will I bring any other love between us; for at night, when I look up into the stars, I hear a low voice saying, "I am waiting for John Markham!"

"More Truth Than Poetry."

An exchange paper says, "that while the business men of America proverbially live poorer, dress shabbier, work harder, and during more hours than those of any other country in the world, their wives and daughters are ten times more idle, more extravagant and more useless."

In the above extract there is, we fear, considerably more truth than poetry. We know a case in point: Mr. Turquoise, of the firm of Turquoise, Opal & Co., of Broadway. Turquoise toils from twelve to sixteen hours a day. Turquoise last year made $22,000. Of this, $10,000 were spent by Mrs. Turquoise for new furniture, "to spite the Leons," while a large portion of the balance was spent in sending "Blanche and Rose" to Newport, to show "the Maxwell's" that there were other diamonds beside those inherited from a great-grandfather, who found in India a princely fortune and a diseased liver.—Turquoise has been in trade since 1840. He does a large and lucrative business. People who have never been in his parlor and kitchen imagine that he is worth a quarter of a million of dollars, while those who have been, are in wonder how he dodges the sheriff. Turquoise is still toiling, and still making money, and yet, if he should die to-morrow, it is questionable whether his assets would meet his liabilities. He will probably end his days by trying the virtue of a shilling's worth of strychnine. Should we be one of the jurors, we should bring in the following verdict: "Died from the visitation of an extravagant wife and two senseless daughters."

A SPARK OF THE ANGEL LEFT.—An exchange says that a number of abandoned women in New Orleans, have, since the breaking out of the yellow fever, in that city, been most unceasing in their attentions to the sick, and have proved the most valuable nurses. They have been the means of saving a number of lives, and, in such angelic labors—for the deeds are heavenly though performed by the daughters of sin—several of them have died—died at the post of duty and mercy, ministering to the victims of the plague.

A WOMAN'S QUESTION.

BY MISS PROCTER.

Before I trust my faith to thine,
Or place my hand in thine,
Before I let thy future grow
Color and form in mine;
Before I peril all for thee, question thy soul to-night for me.

I break all slighter bonds, nor feel
A shadow of regret:
Is there one link within the past
That holds thy spirit yet?
Or is thy faith as clear and free as that which I can pledge to thee?

Does there within thy dimmest dreams
A possible future shine,
Wherein thy life could beneforth breathe,
Untouched, unshared by mine?
If so, at any pain or cost, O, tell me before all is lost.

Look deeper still. If thou canst feel
Within thy inmost soul
That thou hast kept a portion back,
While I have staked the whole,
Let no false pity spare the blow, but in true mercy tell me so.

Is there within thy heart a need
That mine cannot fulfill?
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?
Speak now—lest at some future day my whole life wither and decay.

Lives there within thy nature hid
The demon-spirit Change,
Shedding a passing glory still
Of all things new and strange?
It may not be thy fault alone—but shield my heart against thy own.

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day
And answer to my claim,
That Fate, and that to-day's mistake—
Not thou—had been to blame;
Some soothe their conscience thus; thus thou—oh, surely thou wilt warn me now.

Nay, answer not—I dare not hear—
The words would come too late;
Yet I would spare thee all remorse,
So comfort thee, my fate;
Whatever on my heart may fall—remember, I would risk it all.

The Youthful Bride.

Observe that slow and solemn tread when the youthful bride takes her wedded one by the arm, and with downcast looks and a heavy heart, turns her face from "sweet home," and all its associations, which have for years been growing and brightening, entwining so closely around the purest and tenderest feelings of the heart. How reluctant that step, as she moves toward the carriage, how eloquent those tears which rush unbidden from the fountain.

She has just bidden adieu to her home; she has given the parting hand, the parting kiss! With deep and struggling emotions she has pronounced the farewell and oh, how fond and yet mournful a spell that word breathes, and perhaps 'tis the last farewell to that father, mother, brother and sister.

Childhood and youth, the sweetest morning of life, with "its charm of earliest birds," and earliest associations have now passed. Now commences a new, a momentuous period of existence. She reads in living characters, uncertainty—where home was all in all to her. But these ties, these associations, these enjoyments she has yielded, one by one, and now she has broken them all asunder. She has turned her face from them all, and witness how she clings to the arm of him for whom all these have been exchanged.

See how she moves on! the world is before her, and a history to be written whose pages are to be filled up with life's loveliest paintings, or perhaps with incidents of affecting interest—of startling, fearful record! Who can throw aside the veil even of "three score years and ten," for her and record the happy and sunbright incidents that shall arise in succession to make joyous and full, the cup of life—that shall throw around those embelishments of the mind and the heart that which crown the domestic circle with beauty and loveliness—that which sweetens social intercourse, and softens, improves, and elevates the condition of society. Or who, with firm and unwavering hand, can register the hours and days of affectionate and silent weeping, who can pen the blighted hopes—the instances of unrequited love—the loneliness and sorrow of the confiding heart—the deep corroding cares of the mind, when neglected and forgotten as it were, by him who was dearer to her than life—when all around, was drear and desolate, when the garnered stores are wastened, and the flickering blaze of the earth wanes and goes out, and leaves her in silence, solitude and tears! But her love wanes not, slumbers not, dies not.

The brilliant skies may shed down all their gladdened beauties—nature array herself in gay flowers, and bright hopes and friends may greet with laughing countenances and kind hearts, but it avails naught. One kind look—one soft and affectionate accent; the unequivocal evidence of remaining love—one smile like that which wood and won her heart, would enkindle brighter and deeper emotions at its fountain, than earth with all its splendor, and gay associations.

Oh, young man, ever be to thy young bride what thou seemest now to be; disappoint her not. What has she not given up for thee? What sweet ties that bound heart to heart, and hand to hand, has she not broken off for thee? Prove thyself worthy of all she has sacrificed for thee. Let it ever be her pleasure as now, to cling with confiding joy and love to that arm. Let it be her stay and support, and it shall be well repaid. Hers is an enduring and undying love. Prosperity will strengthen it—adversity will brighten and invigorate it, and give to it additional luster and loveliness. Should the hand of disease fall upon thee, then wilt thou behold woman's devotion! for thou wilt never witness her spirits wax faint and drooping at the couch. When thine own are failing, she will cling to thee like a sweet vine, and diffuse around thy pillow those sweet influences and attractions that shall touch the master springs and noble passions of thy nature—that shall give new impulse to life. Her kind voice will be like music to thy failing heart—like oil to thy wounds. Yea, she will raise thee, restore thee, and make thee happy, if anything less than an gel can do it

The Last Man.

The Cincinnati "Commercial" notices a curious organization of seven young men into a society, on the 30th of September, 1832, while the cholera was raging in that city. Their names were Joseph R. Mason, Wm. Stansbury, Wm. Disney, jr., Dr. James M. Mason, Fenton Lawson, Henry L. Tatem, and Dr. John L. Vattier.—These seven young men had met at the studio of Joseph R. Mason, who was then a portrait painter, when the conversation naturally turned on the ravages of the cholera, and they got into a controversy whether the disease was contagious or non-contagious.

From this they entered into a solemn compact to meet annually, and dine together as long as they lived, and that a bottle of wine should be sealed and drank *in memorium*, by the last survivor. The 6th of October was agreed upon as the day on which to hold the anniversary.—The bottle, of an octagonal shape, was filled, sealed and placed in the casket and locked, and each of the men kept the key year about. Within the casket, beside the bottle, were small slips of oiled paper, on which each of the men had written his name, place and time of birth, and place of residence at that time, his age and occupation.

Whoever held the key for the year was to provide the banquet, whether rich or poor, even if it consisted only of a loaf of bread and a cup of water; and it was arranged that, however the number might be reduced by death, or absence, seven chairs and seven plates should be set at each banquet. Should any be absent, those present were bound to make inquiries as to his whereabouts. Lots were cast for the keeper of the casket the first year, and it fell to Dr. Vattier. The first annual reunion was held on the 6th of October, 1832, since which time the full number has never been present. On the 12th of August, 1858, Henry L. Taten died, leaving Dr. Vattier sole survivor of this singular club; and on the 6th of October, 1858, the Doctor took the last solitary banquet, there being set six empty chairs, and as many empty plates.

Economy.

No man is rich whose expenditure exceeds his means, and no man is poor whose income exceeds his outgoings. It is no small commendation to manage a little thing well. He is a good wagoner who can turn in little room. To live well in abundance is the praise of the estate, not the person. I will study rates how to give a good account of my little, than how to make it more.

Let honesty and industry be thy constant companions, and spend one penny less than thy clear gains; then shall thy hide bound pocket soon begin to thrive, and will never again cry with hunger; neither will creditors insult thee, nor want oppress, nor hunger bite, nor nakedness freeze thee. The whole hemisphere will shine brighter, and pleasure spring up in every corner of the heart. Now, therefore, embrace these rules and be happy. Banish the bleak winds of sorrow from thy mind, and live independent. Then shalt thou be a man, and not hide thy face at the approach of the rich, nor suffer the pain of feeling little when the sons of fortune walk at thy right hand; for independency, whether little or much, is good fortune, and places thee on even ground with the proudest of the golden fleece.

Oh, then, be wise, and let industry walk with thee in the morning, and attend thee until thou reachest the evening hour for rest. Let honesty be as the breath of thy soul, and never forget to have a penny when all thy expenses are enumerated and paid. Then shalt thou reach the point of happiness, and independence shall be thy shield and buckler, thy helmet and crown; then shall thy soul walk upright, nor stoop to the silken wretch because he has riches, nor pocket abuse because the hand which offers it wears a ring set with diamonds.

Personalities.

Personalities are often regarded as the zest, but mostly as the bane of conversation. For experience seems to have ascertained, or at least usage has determined, that personalities are always spiced with more or less of malice.

But you would not have mixed conversation always settled into discussion of abstract topics. Commonly speaking, you might as well feast your guests with straw, chips and sawdust. Often, too, it happens that in proportion as the subject of conversation is a mere abstract, its tone becomes more harsh and dogmatical. And what are the women to do? they whose thoughts always cling to what is personal and seldom mount into the cold vacant air of speculation, unless they have something more solid to climb round. You must admit that there would be a dearth of entertainment and interest and life in conversation without anecdote and story.

Doubtless. But this is very different from personalities. Conversation may have all that is lively and pleasant, without anything that comes under the head of personality. The house in which, above all others I have been the intimate of, the life and spirit, and the joy of the conversation have been the most intense, is a house in which I hardly ever heard an evil word uttered against any one—*Guesser at Truth.*

☞A love-smitten gentleman, after conversing awhile with his dulcinea on the interesting topic of matrimony, concluded at last with a declaration, and put the very emphatic question of, "Will you have me?" "I am very sorry to disappoint you," replied the lady, "and hope my refusal will not give you pain; but I must answer—no." "Well, well, that will do, madam," said her philosophical lover, "and, as we suppose *we change the subject.*"